

[21 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

CERC and has also filed an appeal in Delhi High Court against the CERC order on Availability Based Tariff.

(b) In view of the above, does not arise at this stage.

Conference of State Chief Ministers on Power Reform

2819. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government convened a Conference of State Chief Ministers in the first week of March, 2001 to discuss power sector reforms;

(b) the consensus arising out of this Conference in regard to phasing out subsidies on power supplied to agriculture and minimizing power thefts and transmission losses;

(c) whether the Central Government have issued directives to State Electricity Boards to clean up their fiscals and wipe of accumulated losses within two years; and

(d) whether the Central Government have also envisaged complete electrification of rural areas within a span of five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It was resolved that the past decision of the Chief Ministers of a minimum agricultural tariff of 50 paise per unit may be implemented immediately and it is necessary to move away from the regime of providing free power. The States of Punjab and Tamil Nadu did not agree to immediate raising of agricultural tariff and stopping of free supply to farmers.

The following resolutions were adopted to minimize power thefts and transmission losses:

(i) Energy audit at all 11 KV feeders within next 6 months and accountability to be fixed at the local level. (ii) Full metering of all consumers by December, 2001.

(iii) Launch of effective programmes for identifying and elimination of power thefts in next two years.

(c) The Conference also resolved that the current operation on distribution need to reach break even in two years and achieve positive returns thereafter.

(d) It was also resolved that Rural Electrification may be treated as a Basic Minimum Service under the Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojana and Rural Electrification may be completed by the end of the Tenth plan *i.e.* by the year 2007.

Power shortage in Delhi

2820. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the New Year Day was welcomed in darkness by Delhiites;

(b) whether the power supply in Delhi even in winter is cut daily for different localities by rotation during a day;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor even after an assurance by the Minister; and

(d) what steps are being taken to meet the demand of power in Delhi during the coming summer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The power supply on New Year's Day (1st January, 2001) was normal. However, a major grid disturbance resulted in the collapse of the Northern Region Grid on 2nd January, 2001 leading to near total supply failure in the Northern Region including Delhi.

(b) and (c) Electricity distribution in a State falls within the purview of State Government/State Electricity Board concerned. Due to spurt in demand arising mainly from weather beating loads during winter months, Delhi faced energy shortage varying from 6.7% to 10.3% and peak shortage from 13.5% to 15.5% between December, 2000 and February, 2001. In order to meet the gap between demand and availability, load shedding was carried out by Delhi Vidyut Board (DVB) in different localities